

Three African Dictatorships: An Examination of the Role of Collectivist Ideology, the Communist World, and Western Governments and Corporations

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During much of the 1970s, the African continent was dominated by dictatorships of various stripes-fascist, communist, or racist. Three particularly odious regimes bear particular attention: Macias Nguema Biyoto of Equatorial Guinea; General Idi Amin Dada of Uganda; and Emperor Jean-Bedel Bokassa of the Central African Empire. All three of these dictators were overthrown in 1979. This paper will outline the role collectivist ideology, the communist bloc, and Western governments and corporations played in propping up these three dictatorships.

Spain controlled Equatorial Guinea since the 1700s as a colony. It was known as Spanish Guinea. During the 1960s, various anti-colonial movements demanded that the Fascist Franco dictatorship grant independence to Spanish Guinea. Despite Madrid's close economic ties with Cuba, Havana sought to subvert that colony and exploit anti-Western sentiments to the advantage of the Soviet bloc. Starting in 1962, Cuban agents infiltrated Spanish Guinea under the guise of "historians" in order to stir up anti-Spanish sentiment.¹

One particularly anti-Western nationalist was Macias Nguema Biyoto, who served as a civil servant under the Franco regime. Initially, Macias clung to an ideology which combined anti-colonial nationalism and fascism. He actually believed that the goal of Hitler and the Nazis was to liberate the Third World from colonialism. Macias noted in 1967 that *"I consider Hitler to be the savior of Africa...Hitler's intention was to end colonialism throughout the world. Although it is said that he persecuted the Jews, what he wanted was to combat colonialism but he got confused and then he wanted to command all the peoples of Europe and so the peoples of Europe and America united and attacked Germany and destroyed her...What he wanted was to abolish colonialism and work together. And I have finished on this aspect."*² Macias espoused a vague African humanism, condemned Marxism, and praised fascist rulers such as General Francisco Franco.³ In 1968, Macias was elected President of newly independent Equatorial Guinea and by 1969, became an increasingly dictatorial ruler. A ruling party called the United National Party (PUN) replaced all other political organizations. As Macias moved to the Left, PUN was renamed the United Workers' National Party (PUNT).

Initially, Macias developed a fascist-minded educational system. In 1970, the Ministry of Education issued a policy which rejected Western *"liberal education."* The Macias government believed that *"individualist idealist"* educational policies represented the sterile old order linked with Western colonialism. *"Collectivist materialist"* educational policies were rejected by the Macias government as representative *"of the Jew Carlos Marx (Karl Marx)."* The Ministry noted that Marxism *"has never been applied in any country in its extreme conception; and within the purely communist countries the way is opening for the idea that the individual counts more and more."*⁴ By 1972, the educational system assumed a pseudo-leftist tone. PUNT issued a tract for

¹ Sterling, Claire. The Terror Network (Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1981) page 249.

² Fegley, Randall. Equatorial Guinea: An African Tragedy (Peter Lang New York 1989) pages 51-52.

³ Sundiata, Ibrahim K. Equatorial Guinea (Westview Press, 1990) page 70.

⁴ Ibid.

schools entitled Anti-Colonialist Political Education, which stressed the virtues of labor and the development of an authentic national culture.⁵

Despite Macias' anti-capitalist rhetoric, his increasing commitment to communism, and strong socialist economic policies, Western and American corporations were enticed to invest and trade with Equatorial Guinea. In 1971, Macias urged that his people should do everything in their power to encourage foreign investment.⁶ At a meeting of PUN, Macias stated: "*We know that capitalists never invest on shifting sands or smouldering embers; for this reason we will do all in our power to guarantee political stability in the country.*" Macias desired to establish an industrial base in Equatorial Guinea with government/foreign participation: "*It is certain that this objective can only be achieved with the support of foreign capital which we will welcome.*"⁷ The Anti-Slavery Society noted that the Macias regime was kept in power by United Nations (UN) programs, Spanish and other Western business interests, and technical aid programs disbursed by the USSR and China.⁸ One observer noted "*The usual flock of European and American businessmen had made their rounds to government offices in Malabo during the first half of the 1970s. Yet little comment was heard from them or their capitals.*"⁹ Even the Soviet-infiltrated, leftwing World Council of Churches (WCC) accused France, Spain, and the United States of frustrating the efforts of exiles in order to protect Western business interests in Equatorial Guinea.¹⁰

France maintained ties with Macias for the benefit of French companies and technicians assisting Equatorial Guinea.¹¹ One observer noted that French "*Government spokesmen, company officials and some sections of the press actually became apologists for the Unique Miracle. They actively played down the regime's atrocities...Complicity was certainly the case for while all these sentiments were being expressed, the engineers of S.F. des Dragages were watching slave labor build palaces, and saying nothing.*"¹² France provided a \$43 million loan to assist French companies that traded with Equatorial Guinea. French companies provided technicians for Equatorial Guinean cocoa and coffee plantations. One French company, *Societies Francaise des Dragages et des Travaux Publics* built an administrative center in Malabo that cost millions of dollars. Guillemant built a power plant in Bata. French firms were given several large forestry concessions to pay off the loan for the improvements made to the port facilities in Bata.¹³ The port of Bata was improved by French contractors, costing Equatorial Guinea \$11 million.¹⁴

American oil companies such as Gulf and Continental Oil provided many benefits for the dictatorship of Macias.¹⁵ One observer noted "*American oil and mineral prospecting companies*

⁵ Africa Contemporary Record Volume 4 (Africana Publishing Company, 1972) page B546.

⁶ Sundiata, page 70.

⁷ Africa Contemporary Record Volume 4 (Africana Publishing Company, 1972) page B504.

⁸ Africa Contemporary Record: Annual Survey and Documents page B502-B503.

⁹ Africa Contemporary Record: Annual Survey and Documents page 118.

¹⁰ Africa Contemporary Record: Annual Survey and Documents page B585.

¹¹ Africa Contemporary Record Volume 9 (Africana Publishing Company, 1977) pages B504-B505.

¹² Fegley, page 117.

¹³ Africa Contemporary Record Volume 9 (Africana Publishing Company, 1977) page 115.

¹⁴ Ibid, page 94.

¹⁵ Ibid, pages B504-B505.

were not deterred and personnel from these multinationals slipped in and out of the country from Spain, Gabon and Cameroon in the course of their business.” They included Continental Oil, Gulf Oil, Mobil Oil, Chevron, and Standard Oil.¹⁶

Other Western and communist bloc nations maintained economic relations with the Macias tyranny. The Soviet Union, Red China, Cuba, and Spain purchased Equatorial Guinea’s cocoa and coffee.¹⁷ The Spanish company, SENFSA, continued to operate a furniture factory in Bata.¹⁸ A French-Swiss venture called the *Sociedad Forestal del Rio Muni* received a 10 year timber in Rio Muni.¹⁹ The profitable Maria Victoria plantation of the Spanish company *Izaguirre* was still in business during Macias’ rule.²⁰ A \$12 million Presidential Palace was built near Bata. Marble and wood were imported from Europe to build it. Macias’ bed itself cost \$4,400.²¹ Starting in 1968, an Italian company coined Equatorial Guinea’s currency. After a rise in gold and silver prices, Equatorial Guinea’s currency was printed by the British. In 1978, the Spanish mint *Acunaciones Espafiolas S.A.* coined Equatorial Guinea’s money.²² Iberian Airways and Aeroflot flew into Malabo in Equatorial Guinea.²³

West Germany and Britain purchased Equatorial Guinean cocoa and provided, after Spain, the most imports. The Netherlands purchased 3,123 tons of Equatorial Guinean cacao in 1970. The Dutch also imported 200 cubic meters of sawn wood in 1977. Spain bought 900 cubic meters of logs and 500 cubic meters of sawn wood in 1977. In 1977, West Germany purchased 4,900 cubic meters of logs and Denmark 100 cubic meters of sawn timber. Sweden maintained Equatorial Guinea’s telecommunications system.²⁴

Meanwhile, the Macias regime blasted the Western capitalist world such as Spain, the United States, and other NATO countries. At a banquet with top Chinese officials President Macias stated China was an “*a great socialist industrialized power of the world*” and condemned “*Spanish capitalists*” and referred to the former colonial power as an “*imperialist government*.”²⁵ Suzanne Cronje recalled during an interview with Macias that the Equatorial Guinean dictator lambasted Spain as “*a capitalist, imperialist nation*.”²⁶

Macias fascist-turned-communist collectivism yield shortages, poverty, and a complete loss of economic freedom. The sale of commodities was placed under total government control while shortages were rife in Equatorial Guinea. In August 1974, Macias noted at the First Extraordinary Congress of PUNT that “*Anybody selling a cake of soap at this price will be arrested and brought before the courts to be judged in conformity with the present Constitution of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea...Henceforth, nobody may sell basic articles at abusive prices, but can only sell them at the duly authorized prices of the government of the Republic of*

¹⁶ Africa Contemporary Record: Annual Survey and Documents page 118.

¹⁷ Africa Contemporary Record Volume 9 (Africana Publishing Company, 1977) pages B504-B505.

¹⁸ *Ibid*, page 116.

¹⁹ *Ibid*.

²⁰ *Ibid*, page 93.

²¹ *Ibid*, page 106.

²² *Ibid*, page 96.

²³ Africa Contemporary Record: Annual Survey and Documents page B585.

²⁴ *Ibid*, page 118.

²⁵ “Speech by President Masie” Xinhua September 21, 1977

²⁶ Fegley, page 97.

Equatorial Guinea, and these articles will be controlled by the government itself and nobody else."²⁷ Macias nationalized all economic institutions in Equatorial Guinea. Plantations and cooperatives were turned into state farms, while all private trade was deemed illegal. Government shops (*Empresas Estatales*) were established and dominated internal commerce.²⁸

Early on in the Macias regime, an state economic development agency called the *Instituto de Fomento de Guinea Ecuatorial* (INFOGE) was formed. In 1972, INFOGE was replaced by a foreign trade monopoly called *Simed S.A.* In March 1971, the state-owned transportation corporation (*Transportes Estatales*) was formed and equipped with Fiat buses.²⁹

Labor was also strictly controlled and enslaved in Equatorial Guinea during the rule of Macias. In July 1972, the Compulsory Labor Act was introduced at the Second National Congress of United National Workers Party (PUNT). This Act forced young Equatorial Guinean men to do a year's worth of unpaid work. At the Third National PUNT Congress, a plan was unveiled for the government to recruit 60,000 male and female "*national workers*" to be employed in the agricultural, industrial, and service sectors. All unmarried women were also to be enrolled for compulsory agricultural work.³⁰

Meanwhile, Macias, his immediate family, and the PUNT elite lived in the lap of luxury. Such an arrangement of privileged elitism mimicked the societies of the communist world. Dr. Robert Klinteberg noted that "*Two hotels remain open, the Panafrica and Hotel Bahia in Malabo. The Bahia is attractively situated by the beach, which one is forbidden to visit, thus making the harbour completely out-of-bounds. It is not a bad place. The stained and rotting mattresses have no bugs and it is kept very clean. Guests who bring their own food from abroad have no problems with meals, and, when I stayed there, it was very quiet, possibly because I was the only guest.*" He also stated that "*Even the visiting foreigner quickly becomes aware of the differences between the 'have' and the 'have-nots.'*" *It does not manifest itself so much in clothing, but rather in behaviour and in using money. The 'haves,' smart, confident and free to move around, carry their money in bundles in their pockets. The banknotes are of the best, British-made quality, with a metal thread inside the watermarked paper for electronic detection of counterfeit money. Yet their real value is demonstrated in the way they are often handed over in the standard bundle of nineteen 50-ekuele notes, held together by the folded twentieth. Party officials, having a beer on the terrace of the Hotel Bahia, calmly pay with bundles which neither they nor the recipient bother to count. The 'have-nots' do not swagger, do not drink beer and do not carry bundles.*"³¹ By early 1978, Macias maintained a Swiss bank account worth 50 million pesetas. Equatorial Guinean business deals were conducted in Moscow, Paris and Las Palmas. Macias' government and personal hard currency reserves totaled \$105 million. As of 1978, Equatorial Guinea's total revenue was around \$9 million.³² Macias' wife Monica went on a "*grand shopping tour*" to Moscow, Paris, and Las Palmas. She acted as Macias' business

²⁷ Ibid, page 94.

²⁸ Ibid, page 90.

²⁹ Ibid, page 95.

³⁰ Ibid, page 88.

³¹ Ibid, page 158.

³² Ibid, page 160.

representative and worked through a Lebanese national. She then traveled to Tripoli and then returned to Malabo via Aeroflot.³³

Equatorial Guinea developed close ties with the communist world soon after independence in 1968. The USSR maintained radar and radio stations in Equatorial Guinea, along with closely guarded port facilities.³⁴ Luba became the site for a base for Soviet submarines and spy trawlers. A number of scholarships and apprenticeships were granted to Equatorial Guinean students to study in the USSR. Students included naval personnel, mechanics and administrators. They traveled on the weekly Iberia Airlines flight to Madrid and then took a connecting flight to Moscow. To prevent defections, Aeroflot opened a weekly Moscow-Tripoli-Malabo-Luanda service in 1974. The Soviets provided armored cars and light weapons to the Equatorial Guinea army known as the *Guardia Nacional*. Soviet military advisors trained both the *Guardia Nacional* and the *Milicia Popular*. After the June 1974 coup attempt, Soviet personnel were “*all around*” the *Guardia* firing squad which executed 27 political prisoners. The USSR supplied Macias with radio trucks for inter-provincial military connections, as well as two helicopters and a passenger jet. The Soviets maintained communications and intelligence gathering facilities in the highlands of Fernando Po. By the mid-1970s, the Luba naval base was used as a transfer point for Soviet weapons and Cuban troops destined for Angola. MPLA ships frequently visited Luba, where they were loaded with thousands of tons of arms.³⁵

Cuba took over the highly profitable 150,000 hectare forestry concession after the Equatorial Guinean state confiscated it from the Spanish industrialist Antonio Lopez Sanchez. By early 1976, Cuban soldiers were deployed throughout the country in “*advisory and training roles*” for the *Guardia Nacional*. Cubans also trained National Guardsmen, prison officers, *Milicianos* and the paramilitary youth league (JMM) leaders.³⁶ Two hundred and fifty Cubans and North Korean troops advised the Army.³⁷ The North Koreans dispatched 60 security experts to train the armed agencies of PUNT, the Presidential Guard, and the government.³⁸ The Red Chinese also provided weapons for the *Guardia Nacional* and trainers for the JMM.³⁹ Amin’s Uganda trained some Equatorial Guinean pilots.⁴⁰

Macias government developed an international presence in other countries in order to suppress the exile movement. Macias’s security agents operated in Gabon, Cameroon, and Spain. They engaged in assassinations of Equatorial Guinean defectors and other opponents.⁴¹ PUNT agents repatriated Equatorial Guinean refugees in neighboring Gabon and Cameroon. PUNT agents fomented widespread dissent within exile groups. At first, PUNT agents were untrained thugs who terrorized refugees. Later, a number of PUNT agents were trained in the Soviet Union. These professional PUNT agents specialized in kidnapping and assassination. Hence,

³³ Africa Contemporary Record Volume 12 (Africana Publishing Company, 1981) pages B552-B553.

³⁴ Africa Contemporary Record Volume 12 (Africana Publishing Company, 1981) pages B552-B553.

³⁵ Ibid, page 112.

³⁶ Ibid, page 113.

³⁷ Africa Contemporary Record: Annual Survey and Documents pages B502-B503.

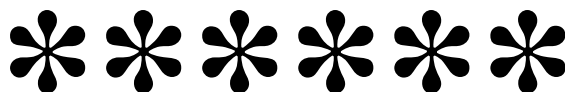
³⁸ Fegley, page 114.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid, page 120.

⁴¹ Africa Contemporary Record: Annual Survey and Documents page B555.

Equatorial Guinean agents embarked on their foreign operations in a more professional manner.⁴² In 1979, officers of the Equatorial Guinean *Guardia Nacional* overthrew Macias, who was subsequently tried and executed.



In 1971, the Ugandan Army led by Major General Idi Amin Dad overthrew the socialist despotism of Milton Obote. Amin promised a shift away from Obote's radical socialist policies. In reality, Amin imposed a brutal, corrupt collectivist dictatorship which possessed shades of fascism, National Socialism, and communism. At least 300,000 Ugandans were murdered by Amin's army and secret police force (State Research Bureau or SRB). Western and American corporations continued to trade with Uganda during the 1970s, while various communist powers supplied economic and military aid to Amin's armed forces and secret police.

In the early years of Amin's rule, the government seemed to embrace a fascist economic formula which rejected free market capitalism and Marxism. In May 1971, Amin commented "*I am one of those who believe that pure capitalism like pure communism or socialism is neither desirable.*"⁴³ Amin characterized in 1974 the "*revolution is neither communist nor capitalist.*"⁴⁴ In 1974, Amin stated that his government "*rejects feudalism and class distinctions in all their forms.*"⁴⁵ Amin stated in a May 1974 address to workers: "*We do not believe in sharp and artificial divisions between workers and so called employers as you find in imperialistic capitalistic countries. We are all joined together by a common bond of brotherhood and have the common goal of achieving prosperity and well being for all our people. In the Second Republic of Uganda there is no room for workers and so called employers to regard each other as belonging to two warring camps. Both the workers and the managers must continue to regard each other as comrades in arms each making their own contribution in their own way towards the desired goal. It is therefore imperative for both the workers and the managers to unite together and fight the common enemies of poverty and unemployment.*"⁴⁶

By the end of the mid-1970s, Amin's rhetoric shifted to an increasingly Marxist tone. Amin proclaimed in July 1976 that "*capitalism has died a natural death in Uganda.*"⁴⁷ In 1977, Amin asserted at a student meeting: "*Imperialists and Zionists are only arming our enemies and not liberation movements in southern Africa, while the Socialist countries are arming us for the*

⁴² Fegley, page 134.

⁴³ Mohr, Charles. "Uganda President to Curb Nationalization Plans" New York Times May 2, 1971 page 24.

⁴⁴ "Amin Interviewed By French TV Team" Kampala Domestic Service February 12, 1974

⁴⁵ "Additional Report" Kampala Domestic Service January 24, 1974

⁴⁶ Mamdani, Mahmood. Imperialism and Fascism in Uganda (Africa World Press, 1984) page 55.

⁴⁷ Africa Contemporary Record: Annual Survey and Documents, Volume 9 (Africana Publishing Company, 1977) page B397.

liberation of Africa.” Amin stated that he continued to oppose capitalism, which promoted selfishness, and favored socialism, which served the interests of the people. Amin promised that Uganda would become a Socialist state.⁴⁸ In 1977, Amin stated *“The capitalism is only dealing with the selfish, because he wanted himself to become rich himself but while leaving the rest of the population poor. This is capitalism. But the socialist countries have been looking into the interest of every standard of the people of their country from top up...”*⁴⁹ In October 1978, Amin stated *“I hope that through this media, meaningful dialogue will emerge between us and friendly nations of the world. I have no doubt that through the same media, we shall effectively fight colonialism, capitalism and racism, even better especially when we shall be reaching right into the enemy's camp.”*⁵⁰ In January 1979, Amin commented that Uganda would be following *“typically African scientific socialism”* and *“Uganda's socialism makes Africans to feel free from all sorts of exploitation by imperialists, colonialists, Zionists, and their agents...the course of our socialism has forced superpowers like America to enforce a trade embargo on Uganda in order to frustrate all her development projects, but it failed.”*⁵¹

During much of his rule, Amin rejected the concept of political parties. However, in the mid-1970s, Amin intended to create a political party based on African socialism. He stated *“Africans do not to follow the imperialist kind of socialism because right from the beginning each African country had its own type of socialism. Socialism is not a new word to the African.”* Earlier in 1975, Amin announced plans to form a Ugandan National Union Party to implement policy and whose representatives would undergo an *“orientation course.”*⁵²

Despite Amin's commitment to a partial denationalization of the Ugandan economy and the move away from socialism, Uganda galloped towards a system based on corrupt collectivism. In April 1974, the State Trading Corporation was abolished and broken into eight government-owned companies, which included Uganda Pharmaceuticals Ltd, Uganda Motors Ltd, Food and Beverages Ltd, Transocean Ltd, Uganda Hardware Ltd, General Merchandise Ltd, Intra-Africa Traders for the export trade, and the National Industrial Machineries. The government also established the Abandoned Property Custodian Board to take over businesses owned by Uganda Asians who were forced out in 1972.⁵³ Various high ranking army officers took over the ownership of businesses in Uganda: the Coffee Marketing Board was placed under the control of officers; Colonel Suleiman took over the ECTA Bus Company and renamed it the People's Transport Company; four NCOs took over as general managers of various industries; the Commissioner of Prisons Okware took over the Lugazi Sugar Estate; and Idi Amin himself took over the Kilembe Mines Ltd. in 1975.⁵⁴ New regulations were also imposed on the Uganda

⁴⁸ The Associated Press March 18, 1977

⁴⁹ *“Amin's Addresses Makerere University Graduates”* Kampala Domestic Service March 18, 1977

⁵⁰ Green, Robin. *“A lady comes to grips with ‘moving’ gripes”* The Globe and Mail (Canada) October 4, 1978

⁵¹ *“Amin on African Socialism”* Kampala Domestic Service January 29, 1979

⁵² Africa Contemporary Record: Annual Survey and Documents, Volume 8 (Africana Publishing Company, 1976) page B351.

⁵³ Africa Contemporary Record: Annual Survey and Documents page B322.

⁵⁴ Mamdani, Mahmood. Imperialism and Fascism in Uganda (Africa World Press, 1984) page 47.

private sector by Amin's government. The Distribution and Prices of Goods Act fixed the minimum prices for goods and ordered them to be prominently displayed.⁵⁵

Land ownership was also collectivized by the Amin dictatorship. In 1975, the government passed the Community Farm Settlement Decree which stipulated force resettlement and labor for unemployed individuals aged 16-40.⁵⁶ In June 1975, Amin nationalized all land in a reform decree.⁵⁷ In October 1977, a Ugandan military spokesman clarified that the land reform: *"Any behavior or attitude of any individual which hinders this work being exploited for public good is utterly selfish and unpatriotic and if necessary government will not hesitate to make more stringent laws to curb such behavior or attitude."*⁵⁸

Other sectors of the economy were regimented by the state during the 1970s. In 1973, Amin permitted tourists to enter Uganda. Foreign visitors were placed under the control of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Foreign tourists were also subject to strict identity and exchange controls.⁵⁹ The press and media were owned by the government. Such state controlled media organs included radio, television, and the Voice of Uganda newspaper.⁶⁰ Labor unions were also suppressed by Obote and Amin. The Ministry of Labor decreed in 1973 that the National Organization of Trade Unions would be established to formulate policies related to trade union management and would exist as the sole, central workers association.⁶¹

Visiting tourists, businessmen, and other foreign delegations were lodged in luxury hotels such as the Kampala International and had access to scarce goods stocked in hard currency shops. In 1975, a duty free shop provided visiting foreign delegations with goods for hard currency.⁶² In 1977, this store's products included Japanese refrigerators, cameras, Red Chinese-made dishes, whiskey, and gin. It was for diplomats and had plate glass windows.⁶³

The Ugandan government also established special shops for soldiers, officers, and SRB agents. These so-called army shops received goods airlifted from Stanstead Airport in Britain. These shops were shown off to foreign visitors to deceive them into believing that there were no shortages in Uganda. Amin reportedly stated to visiting foreigners: *"Look...Look at all this food. There are no shortages in Uganda."*⁶⁴ Each army battalion had its own shop, where sugar, tea, golf clubs, cassettes, children's toys, cameras, car accessories, TVs, clothes, shoes, bags, whiskey, gin, radios, bicycles, brandy, cigarettes, and other consumer and luxury goods were stocked. Special identification was required to enter these stores.⁶⁵

Foreign technicians and multinational corporations provided Amin with the lifeblood of commerce, hard currency, and technical expertise. As of 1977, the Minister of Industry and

⁵⁵ Africa Contemporary Record: Annual Survey and Documents page B304.

⁵⁶ Africa Contemporary Record: Annual Survey and Documents page B445.

⁵⁷ "Uganda Nationalizes Land" New York Times June 2, 1975 page 10.

⁵⁸ "Land Requisition Clarification" Kampala Domestic Service October 23, 1977

⁵⁹ Africa Contemporary Record: Annual Survey and Documents pages B315-B316.

⁶⁰ Kyemba, Henry. A State of Blood (Grosset & Dunlap, 1977) page 245.

⁶¹ Africa Contemporary Record: Annual Survey and Documents page B307.

⁶² "Uganda Plagued by Shortages of Many Basic Commodities" New York Times August 3, 1975 page 12.

⁶³ "Uganda, Under Amin for 7 Years, Is in Social and Economic Chaos" New York Times November 20, 1977 page 65.

⁶⁴ Kyemba, Henry. A State of Blood (Grosset & Dunlap, 1977) pages 253-255.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

Power admitted that 116 foreign technicians were in Uganda manning private and state-owned industries. They were from Great Britain, Egypt, India, Soviet Union, Germany, and Red China. Ugandans went to Eastern and Western Europe, Japan, and the Middle East for training, while Pakistan had sent 400 technicians to Uganda.⁶⁶ Foreigners from India, Korea, France, Ethiopia, Libya, Austria, Canada, Cyprus, Holland, Ireland, and Norway were also employed by private and state-owned enterprises in Uganda.⁶⁷

American coffee companies traded with Uganda until 1978. In 1973, American firms imported 30.6% of Ugandan coffee; in 1976 American firms imported 33.5% of Ugandan coffee, and Britain imported 20.5% of Ugandan coffee. In 1977, the United States imported Ugandan coffee which amounted to \$250 million. Coffee accounted for 93% of Uganda's foreign exchange earnings, thus making the United States Amin's largest trade partner. In 1978 and 1979, Amin airlifted coffee to Djibouti, where it was sold to French businessmen who then shipped it to the United States.⁶⁸ In 1975 and 1976, coffee purchased by American firms totaled \$156 million. In period of 1975-1976, the major importers of Ugandan coffee included Folger Coffee Company, General Foods Corporation, Nestle Company, Saks International Inc., and ACLI Sugar Company.⁶⁹ By 1977, coffee exports comprised 93% of all Ugandan hard currency earnings. Through his control of the Ugandan Coffee Marketing Board (CMB), Amin had access to these earnings. The CMB was a government-owned trading company in charge of Ugandan coffee exports. Under Amin's policy, the CMB paid farmers with vouchers or chits instead of cash. Amin's government took the hard currency from the sales of coffee to the West. Imports of Ugandan coffee by the United States, Britain, France, Japan, West Germany, and the Netherlands paid for goods purchased from the West.⁷⁰ In 1977, it was reported that the chief American purchasers of Uganda coffee were Maxwell, Nestle, and Woodhouse, and Drake & Carey Inc. The Uganda Coffee Marketing Board maintained a six man office team in New York City.

Even when the human rights violations became apparent in Amin's Uganda, American firms exported militarily-related items to the butchers of Kampala. The United States exported \$6 million worth of goods to Amin, which included aircraft, power generation equipment, and engines for Land Rovers in 1976.⁷¹ The US firm Stevens Industries sold C-rations to the Ugandan army and they were discovered in captured APCs.⁷² The Harris Corporation sold \$30 million worth of sophisticated telecommunications satellite system to Uganda in April 1977. This equipment was purchased for the Ugandan Public Telephone Company and the Ministry of Information. Harris also trained of 37 Ugandans at their facilities in Melbourne, Florida, and Rochester, New York. According to three Ugandans who defected from this group, thirteen or fourteen of their colleagues were members of the State Research Bureau (SRB). Harris justified

⁶⁶ Africa Contemporary Record: Annual Survey and Documents page B458.

⁶⁷ Africa Contemporary Record: Annual Survey and Documents page B436

⁶⁸ Avirgan, Tony and Honey, Martha. War in Uganda (Tanzania Publishing House, 1983) pages 15-17.

⁶⁹ Mamdani, Mahmood. Imperialism and Fascism in Uganda (Africa World Press, 1984) page 84.

⁷⁰ Nurnberger, Ralph. "The United States and Idi Amin: Congress to the Rescue" African Studies Review March 1982 pages 50-51 and 53-55.

⁷¹ Williams, Franklin H. "Idi Amin's Achilles' Heel" New York Times August 14, 1977 page 153.

⁷² Avirgan, Tony and Honey, Martha. War in Uganda (Tanzania Publishing House, 1983) page 129.

the sale and installation of the communications system by stating that “*communications is the very essence of freedom.*”⁷³ One captured State Research Bureau document dated from August 3, 1977 in the section on technical operations was a contract between the Amin government and Frank Terpil of Intercontinental Technology. It was for a \$3.2 million sale of surveillance equipment, “*secret special weapons,*” and the “*training of selected students in the art and craft of intelligence, sabotage, espionage, etc.,*” including “*psychological warfare practices.*”⁷⁴

Between 1971 and 1975, the United States sold Bell Helicopters and engines to Amin’s Uganda. Instructors were also dispatched to teach the Ugandans how to pilot these helicopters. After 1975, Bell Helicopters shipped its products through its Italian subsidiary. Ugandan pilots, including SRB undercover officers, attended helicopter pilot training schools in Vero Beach and Daytona Beach FL and Fort Worth TX. As late as 1977, 82 Ugandans entered the United States on diplomatic visas to attend courses on satellite communications training from the Harris Corporation in FL. Many of these Ugandan students were SRB officers including its chief Francis Itabuka.⁷⁵

The British refused to break trade links with Uganda, despite the nationalization of London’s properties and anti-English rhetoric of Amin and the state controlled press. British Foreign Secretary David Owen opined that breaking trade links with Uganda would hurt the people of that country.⁷⁶ Owen ignored the fact that the benefits of British-Ugandan trade were accrued to Amin, his henchmen, and members of the intelligence services and armed forces.

In 1975, the British firm Contact Radio Telephones equipped the OAU conference hall in Kampala with radio communication equipment. The SRB was also equipped with CRT radio equipment for its vehicles and agents. Such equipment included over 300 VHF radios, many of which were found in SRB headquarters after Amin’s overthrow.⁷⁷ In 1976, Security Systems International (SSI) sold telephone tapping equipment, night vision equipment, burglar alarms, and anti-bomb blankets to the SRB. Testing equipment was sold to the SRB by Dymers Electronics Ltd.⁷⁸ In 1974-1977, Pye Telecommunications Ltd. sold the SRB two way radios and allied equipment. In 1977-1978, Pye sold transmitters, pocket radios, PC controllers, antenna, and battery chargers. After Amin’s fall in 1979, Pye equipment was found on the first floor of SRB headquarters.⁷⁹ British Leyland sold Land Rovers and Bedford trucks to the Ugandan Army in 1977.⁸⁰

⁷³ Nurnberger, Ralph. “The United States and Idi Amin: Congress to the Rescue” African Studies Review March 1982 pages 50-51 and 53-55.

⁷⁴ Darnton, John. “Secret-Police Records Reveal Vast Paranoia of Idi Amin’s Regime” New York Times April 18, 1979 page A1.

⁷⁵ Mamdani, Mahmood. Imperialism and Fascism in Uganda (Africa World Press, 1984) pages 78-79.

⁷⁶ Kyemba, Henry. A State of Blood (Grosset & Dunlap, 1977) page 254.

⁷⁷ Mamdani, Mahmood. Imperialism and Fascism in Uganda (Africa World Press, 1984) pages 81-82.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

Other nations also traded with the Amin regime. By 1978, Uganda was the largest importer of Kenyan goods. Kenyan industrialists profited from this trade with Uganda.⁸¹ Since 1974, the Indian firm Tata supplied over 1,000 vehicles to Uganda. By 1978, Uganda became the fourth largest market for Tata's exports.⁸² Japan welcomed a Ugandan trade delegation in 1974. Nisho-Iwai Corporation sold 50 Nissan diesel trucks to Uganda. The Ugandan Minister of Power and Industry Col. Sabuni visited Japan in 1976, where he purchased a large number of Honda cars. In 1977, Isuzu Motors sold 145 heavy and 20 small trucks to Uganda.⁸³ The SRB imported Toyota cars from Japan.⁸⁴ The Swiss firm FFA sold 6 Bravo training planes to Uganda. FFA also provided a training program for pilots and technicians from Uganda.⁸⁵ The West German firm Henschel Export GmbH sold 26 diesel locomotives and a repair workshop to the Ugandans.⁸⁶ The Belgium Shipbuilders Corporation built floating dry-docks at Port Bell on Lake Victoria.⁸⁷ Fiat sold Uganda 510 trucks and 90 trailers financed by an Italian loan in 1976.⁸⁸ France sold Panhard armored cars, electrical equipment, and other hardware to Amin's army.⁸⁹ An Italian company trained Ugandan helicopter pilots.⁹⁰

For an economically collapsed nation, Amin's Uganda built a pervasive intelligence service. The SRB spied on foreigners within Uganda, which were confirmed by detailed files captured by the invading Tanzanian forces.⁹¹ British and other known European companies had bank HQ in Kampala. Their Ugandan staffs were honeycombed with SRB agents and the European managers were initially unaware of their presence. One manager stated "*We imagined that we were not under surveillance but as soon as the business of the alleged Tanzanian invasion arose, to our astonishment about a half a dozen of our people and more in other establishments arrived at work that morning in uniform.*" Local staffs of international banks in Uganda were rarely arrested by the SRB, since Amin wanted to continue good relations with the West and its financial institutions.⁹² One captured Ugandan document addressed to President Amin was authored by intelligence consultant Bob Astles. It highlighted the alleged CIA subversion through foreign companies: "*Your excellency. We have evidence through documentation and interrogation that foreign companies are working against the Ugandan*

⁸¹ Avirgan, Tony and Honey, Martha. War in Uganda (Tanzania Publishing House, 1983) page 15.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid, pages 86-90.

⁸⁴ Smith, George Ivan. Ghosts of Kampala (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1980) page 129.

⁸⁵ Africa Contemporary Record: Annual Survey and Documents pages B454-B455.

⁸⁶ Mamdani, Mahmood. Imperialism and Fascism in Uganda (Africa World Press, 1984) page 89.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Avirgan, Tony and Honey, Martha. War in Uganda (Tanzania Publishing House, 1983) page 25.

⁹⁰ Africa Contemporary Record: Annual Survey and Documents page B309.

⁹¹ Avirgan, Tony and Honey, Martha. War in Uganda (Tanzania Publishing House, 1983) page 150.

⁹² Smith, George Ivan. Ghosts of Kampala (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1980) pages 116-118.

economy. We also have evidence that the CIA is working against you. We would like to give our intelligence verbally. Your obedient servant, Bob Astles."⁹³

Amin also maintained vast networks of agents abroad. The Kenyan Parliament warned about the activities of Amin's agents.⁹⁴ The SRB even maintained agents within the Tanzanian government and Amin received battle plans against Uganda from these agents.⁹⁵ A transcript of a meeting of SRB officials noted that there were two types of training for foreign intelligence officers: "*one of which is within East Africa and the other outside East Africa.*" Two SRB agents were attached to Ugandan embassies and High Commissions overseas and they became known as "*two by twos.*" Important embassies and High Commissions had a greater number of SRB agents. They spied on the diplomats and Ugandan exiles and students. They also compiled reports of foreign journalists and writers.⁹⁶

Various foreign leftists and Black Power advocates visited Uganda and were accorded the royal treatment by the Amin dictatorship. Some on the Left and in the Black Power movements liked the anti-British, anti-American actions of the Amin government, while others were simply snookered by the VIP treatment provided by the government. Some Black Power advocates were even awarded Ugandan citizenship. For example, Stokely Carmichael visited Uganda and received Ugandan citizenship.⁹⁷

Anderson noted that Amin "*has offered state-paid junkets for U.S. public-opinion molders, an effort that has paid off despite the human butchering that has been going on in Uganda.*" One such pro-Amin American visitor was Reverend Ralph Wilkerson. Wilkerson gushed that "*We stayed at the presidential palace, which is normally prepared for visiting heads of state...And when they roll the red carpet out, they roll it out all the way. We flew in Amin's helicopter. We rode on his boat.*" Wilkerson told Americans that Amin was "*misunderstood*" and a "*keen, perceptive and capable*" leader. Wilkerson elaborated that Amin was a leader who wanted "*to love his people.*" When he returned to the US, Wilkerson lobbied against economic sanctions against Uganda. In March 1973, Roy Innis, head of Congress on Racial Equality (CORE), traveled to Uganda with three colleagues. They were made honorary Ugandan citizens by Amin. Innis felt that the Western press distorted the purpose of Amin's expulsion of the Indian Asians from Uganda. He called anti-Amin Americans "*racist pigs.*" After two trips to Uganda, Carlos Russell, a reporter for the Amsterdam News, wrote that "*President Amin possesses the street sense and strength of Malcolm X, the flamboyancy of Adam Clayton Powell, the fervor of Martin Luther King.*" Russell also appeared as a pro-Amin spokesman before a Congressional hearing. Other prominent pro-Amin American fellow travelers included James Lawson, a columnist for the Black American newspaper and a commentator for the Black Mutual Network; Dr. Abdul Malik Rushiddin, an executive for Black Awareness in Television; and reporters for the Black Muslim newspaper, the Bailian News.⁹⁸

⁹³ Darnton, John. "Secret-Police Records Reveal Vast Paranoia of Idi Amin's Regime" New York Times April 18, 1979 page A1.

⁹⁴ Africa Contemporary Record: Annual Survey and Documents page B447.

⁹⁵ Avirgan, Tony and Honey, Martha. War in Uganda (Tanzania Publishing House, 1983) page 150.

⁹⁶ Smith, George Ivan. Ghosts of Kampala (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1980) pages 116-118.

⁹⁷ Africa Contemporary Record: Annual Survey and Documents page B311.

⁹⁸ Anderson, Jack. "Look who's praising Uganda's Idi Amin" The Progress July 26, 1978 page 4.

Kyemba described the attitudes of black American visitors to Uganda: *“The attitude of visiting black Americans generally has been the despair of responsible Ugandans. It seemed that because of their own suffering in America’s past, many were prepared to believe that everything white was wrong and everything black was beautiful. The attitude was anathema to anyone who lived under Amin.”* Amin invited black American journalists and Nation of Islam ministers to Uganda in February 1977. Kyemba noted *“Such visits are actually well staged publicity stunts. Guided tours are organized in Kampala and outside to Acholi and Lango and other places notoriously associated in the foreign press with Amin’s atrocities. The visitors are given the best Amin can offer. Lavish hospitality prevents them from seeing how ordinary people live. They are given cars to ride in, and therefore do not meet ordinary Ugandans except in the presence of Amin’s intelligence boys...For these visitors to accept such propaganda as evidence, and then to make statements about present day Uganda, is as great a disservice to the country as anyone can possibly imagine.”*⁹⁹

Remigius Kintu of the Committee on Uganda noted that Carlos Russell was an advocate for Idi Amin. Russell’s trips were funded by Uganda. Russell testified to Congress and was brought to the hearing by the Second Secretary of the Ugandan Embassy and undercover SRB officers. Kintu also added *“To our dismay there are a lot of black American journalists who have been paid off to lie to the outside world about Idi Amin.”*¹⁰⁰

The Soviets, Chinese, and other communist states praised Amin’s Uganda as a fellow “anti-imperialist” and “anti-Zionist” state which engaged in “progressive” measures. O. Tsvetaev, a writer for the Soviet publication Polar Star told the Uganda Voice that the “economic war had brought a revolutionary transformation in Uganda and opened the road to economic and social progress.”¹⁰¹ Radio Moscow stated “Uganda’s foreign policy bears a distinctly anti-imperialist character. The country has been taking a firm stand against imperialist neo-colonialism and racism in Africa at every international forum.”¹⁰² Even erstwhile enemies of Uganda such as socialist Tanzania praised Amin’s early economic policies of the expulsion of the Asians and the nationalization of foreign-owned properties. The official government newspaper of communist Tanzania commented favorably on the “Economic War” against the Ugandan Asians: *“But in recent months General Amin’s policy has experienced a significant shift. He no longer talks of visiting South Africa. What is more, he has taken over Anglo-American capitalist firms and plantations.”* The article further urged Amin to nationalize and socialize the economy.¹⁰³ In October 1978, the Vice President of the USSR Society of Friendship with Foreign Countries spoke of the “notable achievements of the young country in the economic

⁹⁹ Kyemba, Henry. A State of Blood (Grosset & Dunlap, 1977) pages 242-245.

¹⁰⁰ United States-Uganda Relations: Hearings Before the Subcommittees on Africa, International Organizations, and International Economic Policy and Trade of the Committee on International Relations, House of Representatives, Ninety-fifth Congress, Second Session (Government Printing Office 1978) pages 29, 35, and 37.

¹⁰¹ Mamdani, Mahmood. Imperialism and Fascism in Uganda (Africa World Press, 1984) page 75.

¹⁰² Avirgan, Tony and Honey, Martha. War in Uganda (Tanzania Publishing House, 1983) page 12.

¹⁰³ Melady, Margaret and Thomas. Idi Amin Dada: Hitler in Africa (Sheed Andrews and McMeel, 1977) page 106.

field and its firm anti-colonial and anti-racist policies.”¹⁰⁴ By the late 1970s, TASS and one or two Eastern Bloc countries had press representatives in Uganda.¹⁰⁵

The Soviets forged close military and intelligence ties with Amin’s Uganda. Amin received MIG jets and other military equipment from the USSR in exchange for coffee.¹⁰⁶ Soviet military and KGB forces aided Amin’s army and State Research Bureau (SRB) during much of the 1970s.¹⁰⁷ The KGB took over the Kampala International Hotel as their regional headquarters.¹⁰⁸ In January 1979, the Soviet military specialist for Uganda Col. Patlepenov was welcomed by the Commander of the Marines Regiment Brig. Taban. Taban praised the “*great results*” achieved in military cooperation with the USSR and Uganda.¹⁰⁹

Various Soviet allies in Asia, Europe, and Latin America also provided varying levels of military and economic support to Amin. Three hundred Ugandan Air Force personnel were sent to Czechoslovakia for training.¹¹⁰ The Yugoslavs provided Amin with large quantities of small arms, particularly in 1977. Uganda Airways employees testified that Boeing 707s was loaded with unmarked boxes of small arms in Belgrade.¹¹¹ A high ranking Yugoslav delegation led by League of Yugoslav Communists Stane Dolanc discussed military cooperation with Idi Amin in 1974.¹¹² The Yugoslavs built the SRB headquarters building.¹¹³ East German Stasi trained the SRB in telecommunications, electronics, and computer operations. East Germans worked at the SRB headquarters between 1975 and 1977. Some reports indicated that two Stasi advisers worked at SRB headquarters until the very end of Amin’s rule in 1979.¹¹⁴ A Cuban military delegation to Uganda was led by General and Deputy Defense Minister Francisco Cabrera. Reportedly, the stationing of Cuban troops in Uganda was discussed with Ugandan officials. In 1977, at least 200 Cuban troops were allegedly sent to Uganda.¹¹⁵

¹⁰⁴ Africa contemporary record: annual survey and documents, Volume 11 (Africana Pub. Co., 1980) page B438.

¹⁰⁵ Kyemba, Henry. A State of Blood (Grosset & Dunlap, 1977) page 240.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid*, page 253-255.

¹⁰⁷ Honey, Martha and Ottaway, David B. “Foreigners Aided Amin” *Washington Post* May 28, 1979 page A1.

¹⁰⁸ *United States-Uganda Relations: Hearings Before the Subcommittees on Africa, International Organizations, and International Economic Policy and Trade of the Committee on International Relations, House of Representatives, Ninety-fifth Congress, Second Session* (Government Printing Office 1978) pages 29, 35, and 37.

¹⁰⁹ Africa contemporary record: annual survey and documents, Volume 11 (Africana Pub. Co., 1980) page B438.

¹¹⁰ Africa Contemporary Record: Annual Survey and Documents page B309.

¹¹¹ Avirgan, Tony and Honey, Martha. War in Uganda (Tanzania Publishing House, 1983) page 19.

¹¹² Africa Contemporary Record Volume 7 (Africana Publishing Company, 1975) page B318.

¹¹³ Kyemba, Henry. A State of Blood (Grosset & Dunlap, 1977) page 114.

¹¹⁴ Avirgan, Tony and Honey, Martha. War in Uganda (Tanzania Publishing House, 1983) page 26.

¹¹⁵ “Atrocities said to continue” Facts on File World News Digest April 23, 1977

India sold MIG spare parts, weapons and ammunition, and TATA trucks. The Indian goods were paid with cash and cotton.¹¹⁶ In October 1977, the Ugandans sent a military attaché to Beijing, who “*was doing a good job for the benefit of the two countries.*” China was also one of the countries willing to sell Uganda arms, according to Vice President General Adrisi.¹¹⁷

In May-June 1975, a Ugandan military delegation headed by Major General Mustafa Adrisi, the chief of the general staff, visited the North Korea. According to a Hungarian Communist document outlining the meeting “*Uganda requested that in the future, 30-40 (Ugandan) persons be allowed to study at the military academy of the DPRK for 2-3 years. The government of the DPRK fulfilled the request, and thus it can be expected that the first group of Ugandan soldiers will soon arrive. Uganda asked the DPRK to provide it with arms. The DPRK fulfilled this request, too, on condition that it would transport the requested arms via Tanzania. Uganda asked the DPRK to investigate whether it might be able to build a defense factory in Uganda, and invited a group of Korean (military) experts to visit Uganda, where they could carry out an on-the-spot investigation about the possibilities of fulfilling the request. The DPRK promised to dispatch its experts. The military cooperation between the two countries has been going on for several years; it has undergone a particular intensification after a high-ranking Ugandan military delegation participated in the celebrations that were held in Pyongyang in April 1972.*”¹¹⁸ North Korea pledged military aid to Uganda in April 1977.¹¹⁹

Various radical Arab states also backed Amin with generous financial aid and military assistance. In February 1972, Amin visited Libya and Qaddafi showered him with aid after the Ugandan dictator opportunistically converted to Islam. Kyemba noted that Amin was determined to turn Uganda into an Islamic nation and appropriated the “*pseudo-Marxist phraseology*” of Qaddafi.¹²⁰ In September 1972, Amin praised the murder of the Israeli athletes in Munich by PLO terrorists. Amin stated his support for “*burning the Israelis alive with gas in the soil of Germany.*”¹²¹ Sugar was stored in warehouses and was bartered with Libya for arms.¹²² In 1974 Libyan and PLO advisers assisted the SRB.¹²³ Baathist Socialist Iraq trained a group of Ugandan commandos and paratroopers, while Saudi Arabia provided 105 million shillings to the Ugandan Army.¹²⁴ Libya, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates provided financial aid to Amin.¹²⁵ The pilots of Ugandan MIGs were reportedly piloted by East Germans and PLO pilots in early 1977.¹²⁶ Member of the Israeli Knesset Samuel Flatto-Sharon reported that a captured

¹¹⁶ Avirgan, Tony and Honey, Martha. War in Uganda (Tanzania Publishing House, 1983) page 25.

¹¹⁷ Africa Contemporary Record Volume 10 (Africana Pub. Co., 1979) pages B454-B455.

¹¹⁸ Hungarian Embassy in the DPRK, Report, Military Cooperation Between Between Uganda and North Korea July 10, 1975 Accessed From: <http://digitalarchive.org/document/115817>

¹¹⁹ Africa Contemporary Record: Annual Survey and Documents pages B454-B455.

¹²⁰ Kyemba, Henry. A State of Blood (Grosset & Dunlap, 1977) page 240.

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Avirgan, Tony and Honey, Martha. War in Uganda (Tanzania Publishing House, 1983) page 13.

¹²³ Smith, George Ivan. Ghosts of Kampala (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1980) page 117.

¹²⁴ Mamdani, Mahmood. Imperialism and Fascism in Uganda (Africa World Press, 1984) page 93.

¹²⁵ Kyemba, Henry. A State of Blood (Grosset & Dunlap, 1977) pages 253-255.

¹²⁶ Africa Contemporary Record: Annual Survey and Documents page B389.

letter from the files of Idi Amin's government thanked pro-Soviet David Karr for arranging a \$10 Soviet arms shipment to Uganda, which was then transshipped to the PLO.¹²⁷

Amin's Uganda also supported various "*national liberation*" (terrorist) movements. Amin's telegram to President Nixon (December 1972) mirrored the North Vietnamese line. One author opined that the telegram could have been inspired by the Soviets, a Warsaw Pact embassy, or "*a Uganda government official sympathetic to the communist cause.*" In another telegram to President Nixon, Amin noted that "*US aggressors and the puppet regime who are in the pockets of the imperialist... You should leave the Vietnamese people alone... The Vietnamese people are no longer sleeping and they are not alone in the fight against imperialism.*"¹²⁸ By 1972, Idi Amin supported the Provisional Revolutionary Government (Viet Cong), FRELIMO, the PLO, and South African communist terrorists.¹²⁹ In 1978, Idi Amin met with a SWAPO delegation led by Peter Meshihange, its Secretary for Foreign Relations. Amin also pledged SWAPO use of Ugandan Broadcasting Corporation (UBC) facilities and training for their cadres.¹³⁰ Ugandan President Idi Amin noted that his country "*totally and unconditionally supports the Namibian people in their independence struggle.*" Amin met with SWAPO Foreign Relations Secretary Peter Muesihange in September 1978. Amin announced that Uganda would donate 20 tons of food to SWAPO. Amin also agreed that Ugandan universities would train professional personnel for Namibia/SWAPO. Uganda also provided free buildings for a SWAPO office in Kampala. Kampala also allowed SWAPO to use the Ugandan Broadcasting Corporation (UBC) to broadcast SWAPO propaganda.¹³¹ In November 1976, Amin offered to assist the Angolan MPLA communist to suppress UNITA. He urged UNITA rebels to join Angolan MPLA President Agostinho Neto in an effort to crush South Africa and Namibia.¹³² In April 1977, Uganda expressed its support for "*revolutionary Ethiopia*" under Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam and opined that Ethiopia "*will help the economic development not only of Africa but also of the Third World.*"¹³³

¹²⁷ Rowan, Roy. "The Death of Dave Karr, and Other Mysteries" *Fortune* December 3, 1979
Accessed From: <http://www.freerepublic.com/focus/f-news/1724508/replies?c=158>

¹²⁸ Melady, Margaret and Thomas. *Idi Amin Dada: Hitler in Africa* (Sheed Andrews and McMeel, 1977) page 4.

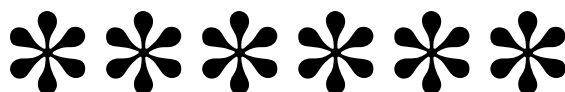
¹²⁹ Mamdani, Mahmood. *Imperialism and Fascism in Uganda* (Africa World Press, 1984) pages 39-40.

¹³⁰ "Uganda President Supports Namibian People's Struggle" *Xinhua* September 7, 1978

¹³¹ *Ibid.*

¹³² "Amin Ready to Help Neto Crush Resistance" *Kampala Domestic Service* November 8, 1976

¹³³ "Ugandan Envoy Gives Amin Message to Mengistu" *Addis Ababa Domestic Service* April 16, 1977



In January 1966, Colonel Jean-Bedel Bokassa seized power in the Central African Republic (CAR) and overthrew his predecessor David Dacko. Bokassa initially propounded an anti-communist, populist, and somewhat pro-Western platform. He sounded the alarm on Red Chinese penetration of the CAR. However, Bokassa's rhetoric smacked of a pseudo-leftist populism. In 1966, Bokassa created a Revolutionary Council and declared: "*The time for justice has come. The bourgeoisie is abolished and a new era of equality among all citizens is established.*"¹³⁴ He became President in 1966, President for Life in 1972, and finally Emperor of the newly formed Central African Empire (CAE). MESAN remained the official party-movement of the Bokassa regime. By the early 1970s, Bokassa received much opprobrium from the West for the human rights violations carried out by his army and police. State Radio in the Central African Republic (CAR) noted that Bokassa's coronation "*will prove to the world that independent Africa has come of age after casting off the fetters of colonialism, and has returned to the authentic way of life of our forefathers.*"¹³⁵ In 1978, a joint communiqué between the Central African Empire (CAE) and North Korea asserted the "*full support and firm solidarity for the just struggle of the peoples of the countries of the new-emerging forces in Asia, Africa and Latin America and the world progressive people against imperialism, old and new colonialism and racism and for sovereignty, independence and the building of a new society.*"¹³⁶ On a visit to Libya, Bokassa denounced the "*neo-colonialist and imperialist powers with France and the US at their head*" because of "*the new direction of its foreign policy*" which was termed "*resolutely African and nationalist.*"¹³⁷

By 1970, Bokassa received economic policy advice from leftwing students and intellectuals who studied in Europe. Possessing Marxist ideas, these advisers encouraged Bokassa to strengthen relations with the Soviet Union, Red China, and the Eastern European Bloc. In July 1970, Bokassa signed trade agreements with the USSR and Ceausescu's Romania. In 1970, Bokassa also accused the French of exploiting the CAR and keeping it underdeveloped. Bokassa adopted "*scientific socialism*" as the CAR's official economic ideology. By late 1970, Bokassa decreed the establishment of massive, state-owned collective farms which were tasked with the export of cash crops abroad for hard currency. In August 1970, the *Office National de Commercialisation des Produits Agricoles* (ONCPA) gained a monopoly on the export trade of cash crops. The profits accrued from these state-owned farms and the best equipment was siphoned off to Bokassa and his cronies.

¹³⁴ Kalck, Pierre. Historical dictionary of the Central African Republic (Scarecrow Press, 2005) page 172.

¹³⁵ The Associated Press November 24, 1977

¹³⁶ "DPRK-CAE joint communiqué published" Xinhua May 4, 1978

¹³⁷ Titley, page 129.

In 1973, Operation Bokassa was unveiled to modernize society and achieve economic self-sufficiency. The book *Philosophie de l'Opération Bokassa*, noted that “*Man is at the centre of this ideology. His views are always considered for his own happiness and for his own future...Operation Bokassa teaches every Central African...to take charge of his own destiny.*” Operation Bokassa was a disaster. The only agricultural enterprises that profited were the private farms of Bokassa and his close cronies. Bokassa nationalized the property of Agence France-Presse, Total¹³⁸, Shell, Purfina, Mobil, Texaco, and Agip. CentraHydro, a state agency, took over the distribution of petroleum products.¹³⁹

By the end of the late 1970s, Bokassa broke with France and the United States over criticism over the CAR's human rights abuses and corruption. As relations with France deteriorated in April 1979, Bokassa sought aid from Libya and the Soviet Union.¹⁴⁰

Bokassa's reportedly obtained Soviet-built tanks and armored cars for his Imperial Guard.¹⁴¹ In December 1977, Bokassa's army troops paraded in Bangui bearing Soviet-made rifles and sub-machine guns.¹⁴² In December 1976, Bokassa restored diplomatic relations with China and severed links with Taiwan.¹⁴³ Two hundred Libyan troops and 6,000 AK-47s were donated by Libya to Bokassa. After the French overthrew Bokassa, these rifles were found in the royal palace.¹⁴⁴ At least 437 Libyan troops reportedly were in Bangui to assist Bokassa and even fought the French in 1979.¹⁴⁵

Despite the human rights violations and increasingly anti-Western shift, Western multinational corporations and government sought to maintain their traditional markets in the CAE. They also believed that aid and trade would provide some leverage over the CAE government. In 1977 and 1978, the Carter Administration provided over \$1.2 million in economic aid to the Central African Empire. In 1978, American relations with the CAE were normalized and then broken in 1979 due to human rights violations and atrocities.¹⁴⁶ French multinational corporations retained control over the Central African Republic's (later Central African Empire) timber, diamond mining, agricultural estates, and import-export trade. In the 1970s, France was the Central African Republic's leading trade partner.¹⁴⁷

¹³⁸ A French owned oil company.

¹³⁹ Titley, Brian. *Dark Age: The Political Odyssey of Emperor Bokassa* (McGill-Queen's Press - 2002) page 70.

¹⁴⁰ “France cuts off aid to African emperor” *The Globe and Mail (Canada)* August 18, 1979

¹⁴¹ Titley, Brian. *Dark Age: The Political Odyssey of Emperor Bokassa* (McGill-Queen's Press - 2002) page 70.

¹⁴² “Bokassa ceremonies 2-hour parade honors African leader's rule” *The Globe and Mail (Canada)* December 6, 1977

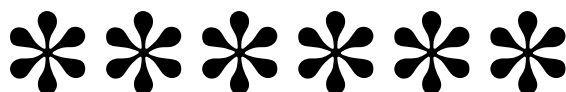
¹⁴³ “Central African Empire” *Facts on File World News Digest* December 18, 1976

¹⁴⁴ McForan, Desmond. *The World Held Hostage* (Oak-Tree Books, 1986) pages 131-133.

¹⁴⁵ “Bokassa men are sent home to Libya” *The Globe and Mail (Canada)* September 27, 1979

¹⁴⁶ Kalck, page 189.

¹⁴⁷ Kwame Anthony Appiah, Henry Louis Gates, Jr. *Africana: The Encyclopedia of the African and African American Experience* (Oxford University Press, 2005) page 9.



Like their communist and fascist counterparts, the Amin, Macias, and Bokassa regimes partially subsisted from the trade and aid provided by the West and the United States. Such a state of affairs proved that the libertarian/"conservative" formula of "*free trade*" and international "*free markets*" does not mollify the attitudes, policies, and practices of thug regimes with anti-capitalist, anti-liberal principles. Greedy multinational companies sought to maintain their traditional markets in Uganda, Equatorial Guinea, and the Central African Republic (later the Central African Empire) and profit from trade with some of Africa's worst monsters. Equally opportunistic communist powers were titillated by the statist-collectivist and "*anti-imperialist*" rhetoric and policies of these three regimes. The USSR, Red China, Libya, and other leftwing/communist countries poured in military assistance and even troops to shore up support for the Amin, Bokassa, and Macias dictatorships. Moscow and its allies even defended these odious governments in international forums and their controlled media. The collectivist, pseudo-Marxist policies so beloved by the USSR resulted in economic collapse and virtual slavery in Uganda, Equatorial Guinea, and the Central African Republic. Sadly, the United States and the "*free trade*," "*free market*" people continue to ignore the reality of trade empowering the enemies of freedom and capitalism. The cases of Angola, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Iran, Vietnam, China, and Russia are clear illustrations of my latter point.